

**Amendments to the Claims** are reflected in the listing of claims which begin on page 3 of this paper.

**Remarks/Arguments** begin on page 5 of this paper.

**Amendments to the Claims**

Please cancel Claims 9-11. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

**Listing of Claims**

1. (Original) A method for collecting a sample derived from faecal material, comprising contacting the faecal material with a fluid and subsequently collecting a sample of the fluid with a brush or brush-like device having flexible or semi-flexible bristles, wherein the sample of the fluid is collected within the bristles of the brush or brush-like device.
2. (Original) A method according to claim 1, wherein the fluid is water.
3. (Original) A method according to claim 1 or claim 2, wherein the bristles of the brush or brush-like device have a length of from 0.2 to 3 cm, preferably from 1 to 2 cm.
4. (Original) A method according to claim 1, wherein the sample collected with the brush or brush-like device is transferred to an assay device for subsequent testing.
5. (Original) A method according to claim 4, wherein said assay device is a test device for detecting occult blood or one or more other indicators of a pathological condition in the faecal material from which the sample is derived.
6. (Original) A method for the detection of occult blood in faecal material, which comprises the steps of:
  - i. contacting the faecal material with water to disperse any blood present in or on the faecal material into the water.
  - ii. subsequently collecting a sample of the water with a brush or brush-like device having flexible or semi-flexible bristles, wherein the sample of water is collected within the bristles of the brush or brush-like device; and
  - iii. detecting the presence of blood, if any, in the sample.

7. (Original) A method according to claim 6, wherein the presence of blood, if any, in a sample is detected by means of a guaiac test.
8. (Original) A method according to claim 6, wherein the presence of blood, if any, in the sample is detected by means of an immunochromatographic test.

9-11. (canceled)